

**NTS SERVICES CORP.**

**Docket No. 12-0116**

**GALLATIN RIVER COMMUNICATIONS  
L.L.C. D/B/A CENTURYLINK**

**JOHN FORDHAM**

**GALLATIN RIVER COMMUNICATIONS L.L.C. D/B/A CENTURYLINK**

July 12, 2013

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF  
JOHN FORDHAM  
GALLATIN RIVER COMMUNICATIONS L.L.C.**

1     **I.           INTRODUCTION**

2     **Q.       Please state your name and business address.**

3     A.       My name is John Fordham. My business address is 416 Margaret Street, Pekin, Illinois,  
4           61554.

5     **Q.       On whose behalf are you submitting this opening testimony?**

6     A.       I am submitting this Direct Testimony on behalf of Gallatin River Communications  
7           L.L.C. d/b/a CenturyLink (hereafter “CenturyLink”), the Illinois incumbent local  
8           exchange company (“ILEC”) of CenturyLink, Inc.

9     **Q.       By whom are you employed and what is your position?**

10    A.       I am currently employed by CenturyLink as the Manager of Area Operations for the  
11           Illinois Market Area. I have held this position since February 6, 2012.

12    **Q.       What are your responsibilities as an Area Operations Manager?**

13    A.       I am responsible for managing the day-to-day operations for CenturyLink’s Illinois  
14           exchange areas. This includes meeting customer service requirements, managing  
15           personnel issues, preparing and administering operating budgets, as well as various  
16           administrative duties. In addition, I am responsible for involvement within the Illinois  
17           Market Area in aspects of sales, marketing, engineering, regulatory, and public relations.

18 These activities, in terms of Company structure, report through other organizational  
19 channels at CenturyLink.

20 **Q. What positions did you hold before becoming an Area Operations Manager?**

21 A. Most recently, from February 1999 to February 2012, I was the Engineering and  
22 Construction Manager for CenturyLink and for predecessor companies. Prior to that time,  
23 I held various Operations Management, Sales, Business Office, and Operational Craft  
24 positions dating back to January of 1973.

25 **Q. What were your responsibilities as an Engineering and Construction Manager ?**

26 A. I was responsible for developing and administering the Capital budget for the Illinois  
27 Market Area. In addition, I supervised engineering and construction personnel, both  
28 internal engineering and construction employees, and contractor personnel. The  
29 contractor involvement included administering our Line Extension Contract, as well as  
30 placing project work out for bid if the scope of the project warranted. I was accountable  
31 for ensuring that construction projects were completed in a timely, efficient, and quality  
32 manner, and that construction-related invoices were processed accurately.

33 **Q. Please describe your experience in the telecommunications industry prior to**  
34 **becoming Engineering and Construction Manager.**

35 A. I have worked in the telecommunications industry in various capacities for over 40 years.  
36 I started my career in 1973 with Central Telephone Company of Illinois and held a  
37 variety of positions of increasing complexity and responsibility in the Customer Service,

38 Sales, Business Office, and Operations Management areas, until moving into  
39 Engineering and Construction in 1999.

40 **Q. Please describe your educational background.**

41 A. I obtained an Associate in Science degree in Business from Sauk Valley Community  
42 College, Dixon, Illinois, in 1987. In 2004, I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business  
43 Administration from Midstate College in Peoria, Illinois.

44 **Q. Have you previously testified before any state commission?**

45 A. No

46 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

47 A. The purpose of my testimony is to respond to parts of the testimony submitted by Sue  
48 Scott on behalf of NTS Services Corp. ("NTS"). In particular, I will address  
49 CenturyLink's current practices concerning prequalification of loops and loop labeling.  
50 In addition, I will address NTS's complaints regarding notification of the resolution of  
51 trouble reports, access to collocation space, failures of back-up power and alleged  
52 slamming of customers in connection with the Crescent Street copper retirement. Finally,  
53 I will comment on Attachments 11, 15, 18, 19 and 22 to Sue Scott's testimony.

54

55

**II. REBUTTAL OF NTS's TESTIMONY**

**PREQUALIFICATION OF LOOPS**

**Q. Were you aware that CenturyLink had for a short period of time used MapQuest to determine loop distances for the purposes of prequalifying loops?**

A. Yes. It is my understanding that CenturyLink used MapQuest for a short period of time during 2009 to prequalify loops. As Mr. Miller testifies, CenturyLink has not used MapQuest in Illinois since then.

**Q. How did CenturyLink determine loop distances after it ceased using MapQuest?**

A. After CenturyLink made the decision to cease using MapQuest, it decided to use cable records to determine loop distances. This involved manually adding up the kilofeet measurements per access point that were recorded in the physical cable records. The reliability of this method depends entirely upon the accuracy and completeness of the records that were prepared and maintained by CenturyLink's predecessors. Today, if the characteristics of a loop are particularly important, a CLEC has the option of requesting a full cable verification of the loops, in which case CenturyLink will physically inspect loops to determine whether there are load coils and bridge taps and will conduct various tests to check for noise, power influence and circuit loss. CLECs rarely request this type of full inspection because most loops do not require this sort of enhanced testing and CLECs do not want to pay the additional charge.

75 **Q. Can one determine whether there are load coils or bridge taps on particular loops**  
76 **by examining physical cable records?**

77 A. That depends entirely upon whether, and to what extent, load coils and bridge taps were  
78 recorded in the cable records. As a general rule, load coils are only used for loops that  
79 are longer than 18,000 feet. Very few of the loops in the Pekin area are longer than  
80 18,000 feet.

81 **Q. Has NTS commonly requested prequalification of loops in your experience?**

82 A. No. I do not recall a single recent instance in which NTS has requested a prequalification  
83 of loops.

#### 84 **TAGGING LOOPS**

85 **Q. What does tagging (or labeling) loops involve?**

86 A. Tagging a loop means placing a piece of heavy paper or tape, sometimes attached to a  
87 string, on the end of the physical loop to indicate that the loop is being used by a  
88 particular carrier. This is usually done at the NID.

89 **Q. How does a technician determine what loop is used for a specific customer?**

90 A. The technician puts a tone on the loop from inside the premises and then checks to see  
91 which pair of wires at the NID has the tone.

92 **Q. Can a trained CLEC technician perform this same tone identification method?**

93 A. Yes.

94 **Q. As a general business practice, does CenturyLink tag loops for its own needs?**

95 A. No, it does not.

96 **Q. Does CenturyLink tag loops in the process of provisioning loops to CLECs?**

97 A. Not unless a service technician is dispatched to the field as a result of a service order.  
98 Some service orders are provisioned by running a jumper wire in the central office. If the  
99 service order does not involve the dispatch of a technician, there is no occasion for the  
100 loop to be tagged at the NID or any other location in the field. CenturyLink does not tag  
101 loops for its own purposes.

102 **Q. Will CenturyLink tag loops if tagging is requested in connection with the dispatch of**  
103 **a technician?**

104 A. Yes. If there is a specific request to tag a loop for a dispatched ticket, a CenturyLink  
105 technician will tag the loop.

106 **NOTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION OF TROUBLE REPORTS**

107 **Q. How has CenturyLink historically handled notification of the resolution of trouble**  
108 **reports?**

109 A. Trouble reports are processed at CenturyLink by a regional dispatch center, which has the  
110 responsibility for the dispatch of technicians using an automated system. Historically,  
111 CenturyLink has not provided telephone notification of a particular resolution of a trouble

report unless specifically requested to do so by the reporting customer. This was true both for CLECs and CenturyLink's own customers. It has been a common practice within the telephone industry as well as other utility and television industries not to report the resolution of trouble reports via a follow-up telephone call. A customer typically knows when its service has been restored.

**Q. In your opinion, should the practice of not providing telephone notification of trouble ticket resolution cause any issues or concern for a CLEC such as NTS?**

A. In my opinion, no. Technicians have a very busy and difficult job and derive their work instructions from the trouble tickets they receive. If a CLEC wants positive confirmation of trouble resolution, it must request notification in the trouble report it submits to CenturyLink. Whether it requests notification or not, the CLEC can always call CenturyLink at the end of the scheduled repair date to determine the resolution of the trouble ticket. Furthermore, the CLEC can contact its own customer at that time to ensure that the trouble has been resolved and by doing so demonstrate its commitment to quality service.

**Q. Have any CLECs other than NTS complained about not receiving trouble resolution notification?**

A. I have not heard of any such complaints.



130    **ACCESS TO COLLOCATION SPACE**

131    **Q.     At lines 616-654 of her direct testimony, Ms. Scott complains that as a result of a**  
132           **change in CenturyLink security systems during October, 2011, NTS's old security**  
133           **access cards did not allow NTS technicians access to its collocation sites on two**  
134           **occasions. Did CenturyLink in fact deny NTS access to its collocation sites?**

135    **A.**     No. If building entry is not possible via a security access card, CLEC technicians know  
136           to contact a CenturyLink employee to obtain access. When NTS notified me (and to my  
137           knowledge any other employee at CenturyLink) that its technicians needed access to a  
138           collocation site and could not obtain access through their access cards, arrangements  
139           were immediately made to give the NTS technicians access.

140    **Q.     Did CenturyLink change security systems in Illinois in the Fall of 2011?**

141    **A.**     Yes. CenturyLink changed security systems from the Continental security system  
142           previously provided by SEICO Security Systems to a CenturyLink companywide security  
143           system known as "Lenel." The SEICO access cards were not compatible with the Lenel  
144           security system. As a result, everyone who needed access to CenturyLink properties in  
145           Illinois required a new photo/access card. In Illinois, there were approximately 80  
146           individuals including CenturyLink employees, contractors and collocating carriers that  
147           needed new access cards.

148

149   **Q.     How was the change in access cards to be accomplished?**

150   A.     The provision of new access cards was arranged by Physical Security at CenturyLink.  
151           Pam Ulibarri, a Senior Security Specialist in Physical Security, notified the Pekin Office  
152           by email on Monday, September 26, 2011 that the Continental security system would be  
153           converted to the companywide Lenel system at some point that week. Because this was a  
154           company-wide initiative, and the conversion schedule for Illinois locations depended on  
155           the completion of earlier scheduled locations, the specific date of the conversion was not  
156           provided.

157           Physical Security also notified the Pekin office that the change in access cards for  
158           contractors and collocators was to be handled in two steps. First, blank cards had been  
159           sent out to be distributed to contractors and collocators who were authorized to have  
160           access to space in CenturyLink central offices. Physical Security was not able to send out  
161           photo IDs to contractors and collocators because that Department was not able to retrieve  
162           identification photographs from the Continental security system. Physical Security  
163           requested that each time a blank card was given to a technician, the person distributing  
164           the card was to notify Physical Security of the name, address, telephone number,  
165           CenturyLink sponsor and card number provided to each individual. Second, the CLECs  
166           and contractors were required to submit photographs to CenturyLink that could be used  
167           by Physical Security to produce a photo skin for the cards. To give contractors and  
168           collocators time to submit photographs, the blank cards were initially activated for a two  
169           week period. Once it received the photographs, Physical Security would extend the  
170           deactivation date beyond the initial two weeks and send out the photo skins to be put on

171 the blank cards. The limited duration of the initial activation was a security precaution to  
172 prevent unauthorized access to CenturyLink facilities in the event that blank cards ended  
173 up in the wrong hands.

174 **Q. Can you determine from Sue Scott's testimony when or why precisely NTS was**  
175 **unable to use its security access cards to access collocation sites?**

176 A. No. Ms. Scott does not provide specific dates on which NTS's access cards did not work,  
177 the location or locations NTS was attempting to enter, the individuals at CenturyLink  
178 who NTS contacted when their cards did not work or any other specific details that I  
179 could use to investigate her claims. As a result, I have been unable to determine whether  
180 the process prescribed by Physical Security was precisely followed by NTS and  
181 CenturyLink. However, I do believe that the blank access cards were provided to NTS,  
182 that NTS did submit photos to be used to produce photo skins, and that NTS did receive  
183 the photo skins.

184 **Q. Ms. Scott's Attachment 18 contains certain emails pertaining to building access.**  
185 **How do you respond?**

186 A. I note that none of the emails relate to the October, 2011 switchover of Security systems.  
187 Pages 1, 2 and 3 pertain to building access problems under the Continental security  
188 system previously provided by SEICO Security Systems to CenturyLink. Nothing in the  
189 emails on pages 1, 2 or 3 of Attachment 18 indicate that CenturyLink did anything  
190 wrong, much less knowingly. Sometimes security cards fail for one reason or another  
191 and all one can do is to try to work through or around the problem. Page 4 of Attachment

18 concerned access to two specific collocation sites in January 2012. I personally worked on ensuring that NTS had access to these two sites and made arrangements to ensure that they had access when notified that there was a problem.

**BACKUP POWER**

**Q. At lines 656 – 683 of her testimony, Ms. Scott complains about CenturyLink’s testing of back-up power beginning in July, 2010. Why has CenturyLink tested back-up power during the day rather than at night?**

A. The testing of generators is a regular and routine event. There should be no outage caused by a generator test because it is a test of the backup generator and the transfer system to ensure that both are operable in the event of a commercial power outage. Because no outage is anticipated, there is no reason to test a generator during a night maintenance window. Further, CenturyLink personnel are scheduled to be at the central office location during the day, not during the night, and it is therefore more cost effective to conduct the generator test during normal business hours. Although the Illinois Commerce Commission’s regulations require that back-up power be tested at least once a month, CenturyLink policy is to test more frequently to ensure the best level of quality service to our customers,

**Q. Please describe the power arrangements that have been in place for NTS during your tenure at CenturyLink?**

A. NTS has historically obtained both its primary and back-up power from CenturyLink. CenturyLink’s primary power supply is provided by Ameren Illinois. For back-up

power, CenturyLink has an onsite diesel generator to provide power in the event that power from Ameren Illinois is interrupted. When primary commercial power fails, the diesel generator automatically activates for both CenturyLink equipment and NTS equipment. As I earlier mentioned, a transfer system is also needed to provide uninterrupted power during the momentary switch-over from commercial power to back-up power. NTS has historically maintained its own temporary back-up batteries (or “UPS”) for uninterrupted transfer. However, as with an automobile battery, these batteries have a limited lifespan and their charge gets weaker over time, especially near the end of their lives.

**Q. What happens if back-up power is tested and NTS’s back-up batteries are old and weakened?**

A. Under that circumstance, if the back-up batteries do not maintain sufficient power during the momentary switch-over from commercial power to back-up power, NTS’s equipment will shut-down and will have to be rebooted in order to provide service. As a result, there will be an interruption in service and it will last longer than the brief time that power is interrupted due to the switch-over from commercial power to back-up power. In my opinion, based on the little information supplied by NTS in its testimony and my own observations and investigation, this was most likely the cause of the service interruptions that NTS experienced during the testing of back-up power during July, 2010. Attached as Exhibit 4.1 is a diagram of my understanding concerning the arrangement of power supplies to NTS’s equipment in its collocation space. As is apparent from Exhibit 4.1, the last source of power connected to NTS’s equipment is its UPS. Consequently, the

only way that an interruption of the power supply from Ameren Illinois can cause NTS's equipment to fail is if NTS's UPS also fails to supply adequate power while the primary power is down.

**Q. Ms. Scott speculates that someone at CenturyLink must have had NTS power rerouted off of protected status? Have you investigated her assertion?**

A. Yes. I have investigated her assertion by talking with former General Manager Ty Lemaster and other individuals at CenturyLink and have found no evidence that anyone at CenturyLink made any such changes to the power supply that connects to NTS's equipment. I would add that Ms. Scott does not provide any facts to support her accusation.

**Q. What did CenturyLink propose to NTS after the July, 2010 interruptions to prevent future power interruptions during back-up power testing?**

A. CenturyLink recommended that NTS purchase a power augment connection to CenturyLink's inverter, because CenturyLink believed this to be the most cost-effective solution. New batteries purchased by NTS would not have been as reliable as the power augment solution. In essence, an inverter converts direct current to alternating current that will provide power to NTS from a CenturyLink power source during testing of back-up power. With this equipment, there is no momentary interruption in power to NTS's equipment during the switch-over from commercial power to back-up power. To my knowledge, since NTS connected to this equipment there have been no problems with the testing of back-up power. CenturyLink continues to test back-up power weekly as is its

policy without further complaint by NTS. Attached as Exhibit 4.2 is a diagram of the CenturyLink proposed solution that was implemented. The inverter in this diagram converts DC power from CenturyLink's batteries to AC power that can be used by NTS's equipment.

**CRESCENT STREET DIGITAL LOOP CARRIER AND COPPER RETIREMENT**

**Q. At lines 722 to 741, Ms. Scott alleges that CenturyLink engaged in slamming by moving certain unidentified NTS customers off of copper loop facilities leased by NTS in the Crescent Street neighborhood. Do you know what she is referring to?**

A. I believe she is referring to customer migrations that took place as a result of the retirement of the copper feeder (Base cable 6) in the Crescent Street neighborhood. However, as discussed in Guy Miller's direct testimony, there was no slamming of these customers.

**Q. What caused the retirement of the copper feeder in the Crescent Street neighborhood?**

A. CenturyLink had to replace certain copper feeder cable, specifically Base cable 6, serving the Crescent Street neighborhood because it had deteriorated and was in danger of failing. On August 6, 2010 and again on December 14, 2010, I provided notices to NTS that the copper would have to be retired in the first quarter of 2011 and replaced with a fiber-fed Digital Loop Carrier. Copies of the notices that I prepared and sent are attached as Exhibit 4.3. CenturyLink did not receive a response from NTS and ultimately postponed the Phase 1 work with respect to NTS's customers. Because we did need to rectify this

277 situation, however, we filed a Short Term Notice of Network Changes with the FCC,  
278 pursuant to Sections 51.325 – 51.335 of the FCC’s rules. This Notice indicated that the  
279 retirement impacting NTS customers would commence on July 11, 2011. NTS filed an  
280 objection with the FCC requesting until December 31, 2011 for the copper to be retired  
281 so that NTS could explore alternative ways of serving its customers. CenturyLink agreed  
282 to postpone the work impacting NTS’s customers until December 31, 2011.

283 **Q. Did NTS find a way to serve its DSL customers without the copper feeder that was**  
284 **to be retired?**

285 A. I don’t know what steps, if any, NTS took prior to December 31, 2011 to notify its  
286 customers concerning the copper retirement, or to arrange to have the customers moved  
287 to an alternative service or provider. Based on my personal discussions with NTS and  
288 CenturyLink account management personnel, I do not believe NTS found an alternative  
289 way to serve the impacted DSL customers.

290 **Q. What happened after the December 31, 2011 deadline for NTS to move its**  
291 **customers off of the copper feeder?**

292 A. Although CenturyLink had followed all required rules and regulations regarding copper  
293 feeder retirement, and had the right to replace the failing copper feeder, CenturyLink was  
294 left in a position in which the copper feeder was still being used by NTS on January 1,  
295 2012 to serve its customers. CenturyLink therefore had the choice of either cutting off  
296 service to the customers or working with NTS to find alternative service arrangements for  
297 its customers. For the month following December 31, Account Manager Susan Smith



and I worked with NTS to find alternative service arrangements so that the customers were not just cut off.

**Q. Did CenturyLink move any customers off of the UNE loops leased by NTS without the customer's permission prior to December 31, 2011?**

A. No. I am aware of one NTS customer that switched providers prior to December 31, 2011. That customer was a car wash business that had requested service from CenturyLink.

**ATTACHMENTS TO MS. SCOTT'S TESTIMONY**

**Q. Ms. Scott includes certain pictures of alleged field work as Attachment 11 to her testimony. How do you respond to Attachment 11?**

A. I have two observations about the pictures that make up Attachment 11. First, it is impossible to tell from the pictures who was responsible for the placement of the cable and equipment depicted in the pictures and when such placement was made. Ms. Scott does not claim in her testimony that she knows who placed the cable and equipment depicted in the pictures and assumes that it was CenturyLink. CenturyLink acquired the Gallatin River exchanges in 2007 and it is very possible that the prior owners of Gallatin River were responsible for these conditions. Based on a visual review, it is my opinion that some of these attachments may be so old that they met the industry installation standard that was in place at the time. Others appear to be temporary drops for new service or repair issues. Second, in the course of preparing my testimony, I viewed and took pictures of the locations that are depicted in the pictures for which addresses were provided. The addresses that I looked at were:

Neil's Appliance, 412 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Pekin, Illinois

Kelly Construction, 201 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Pekin, Illinois

Brookmeadows Apartments #9, Pekin, Illinois, 61554

Moose Lodge DLC, Broadway Rd, Pekin, Illinois

Attached as Exhibit 4.4 are pictures of the cable and equipment placement today. NIDs are placed at each subscriber location and are easily accessible for testing purposes. At the Moose Club site; the temporary wire that had been placed there for service purposes was removed long ago and was replaced with permanent buried facilities.

**Q. Ms. Scott attaches what purport to be Incident Reports as Attachment 15 to her testimony. What do you discern from these Incident Reports?**

A. I did not prepare these incident reports and can only discern what is contained in them. To me, these incident reports illustrate the types of problems CenturyLink technicians encounter while trying to perform their duties in good faith. For example, the first incident report (#25693) states on the second page that CenturyLink was not able to get access to a building to perform its work and closed out the ticket. The incident reports also support my earlier statement that CenturyLink technicians will tag loops when requested to do so on a dispatch. The second page of the first incident report (#25693) states "Line now tagged properly tested good" on the entry for 9/14/2011. Similarly, the second page of incident report #25843 states that "CTL has the apt terminal tagged" in the line entry for 12/13/2011 at 4:02:28 pm. The entry for 12/15/2011 at 8:37:43 states

that I had talked with a NTS representative and that I had checked with CenturyLink technicians and was told that “everything had been tagged and that they had continuity to the CO.” It is important to understand that these types of interactions are routine occurrences when field work is involved. Field conditions often vary, and from time to time, problems will be encountered that cause delays or additional work. I, and others at CenturyLink, have often gone out of our way to assist NTS when problems are encountered. Yet, all that NTS mentions are the circumstances in which things did not go perfectly from their perspective.

**Q. Did NTS provide any documentation in its Attachment 19?**

A. No.

**Q. Attachment 22 purports to be a NTS Incident Report. How do you respond?**

A. I do not know who prepared Attachment 22 but have reviewed its contents and see nothing that indicates that CenturyLink knowingly failed to respond to a trouble ticket or to perform work in other than a good and proper way. In many cases the remarks section of Attachment 22 reflects that CenturyLink did in fact perform its work correctly. On page 1, the first three remarks merely mention what CenturyLink found but do not contradict the findings in any way. The same is true for the fifth and sixth remarks. The final remark on page 1 reports that there was a disagreement about whether there was a problem and the parties jointly met at the site to review the complained of condition. That is precisely how these sorts of disagreements are worked out.

On the second page of Attachment 22, the second through sixth remarks and the final remark merely report what was found at the site and do not provide any evidence that

363 CenturyLink acted improperly in any way. The first and seventh remarks on the second  
364 page of Attachment 22 complain about the time it took to repair particular problems but  
365 do not describe the circumstances or field conditions that led to the delay.

366 The third page reflects three vendor meets in the first, second and fifth remarks which  
367 demonstrates CenturyLink's efforts to try to repair problems correctly and its efforts to  
368 resolve issues with NTS. The only remark on page 3 of Attachment 22 that troubles me  
369 is the remark that CTL installed a loop at the wrong house, but there could be many  
370 reasons for such a thing to happen such as an address transposition error or an honest  
371 technician mistake.

372 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

373 **A.** Yes, it does.

STATE OF ILLINOIS     )  
                                      )  
COUNTY OF TAZEWELL)

**VERIFICATION**

I, John Fordham, do on oath depose and state that the facts contained in the foregoing Direct Testimony of John Fordham on Behalf of Gallatin River Communications, L.L.C. d/b/a CenturyLink are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

John Fordham  
JOHN FORDHAM

SIGNED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS 9th day of  
July, 2013.

Rhonda R Dalton  
Notary Public

My Commission expires:

02-06-16

